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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/22/2027
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [UNIFIL](#) [CY](#) [LE](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY CONFIRMS OFFER TO COMMAND UNIFIL NAVAL
ELEMENT, DENIES CAVEATS

REF: NICOSIA 0127

Classified By: POL-MIL COUNSELOR CARL SIEBENTRITT FOR REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

11. (C) MFA Middle East Department Head Sedat Onal and Turkish Navy Plans and Policy CDM Cem Gurd to take oveQ after Germany.

12. (C) Both officials insist&d that the Turkish offer was made without Cyprus-related caveats. Turkish command of the force would not prejudice the ability of contributing nations to use any ports or facilities in the region they wish. Customary restrictions on Turkish forces connected with the Cyprus dispute remain, however. Turkish vessels, for example, will not call at Republic of Cyprus ports. By the same token, Turkish naval vessels would continue to make use of ports and facilities in northern Cyprus.

13. (C) Onal stated that the Turkish parliament may be required to authorize Turkey's assumption of command. Gurdeniz said that Turkey would assign additional naval assets to UNIFIL should it be offered the command. Turkey currently has one frigate assigned to the naval force and has offered two corvettes as well naval facilities at Aksaz and the port of Mersin for UNIFIL use. A Turkish construction engineering company is assigned to the UNIFIL land component.

14. (C) Comment. Turkey is set to assume command roles in other peacekeeping operations, taking charge of ISAF's Regional Command Capital in April and KFOR's Multi-National Task Force South in May. Turkey may see a leadership role in a UN mission as helping its bid for a UN Security Council seat in 2009-2010. End Comment.

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